



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY LIBRARY CELEBRATES FREEDOM TO READ DURING “BANNED BOOKS WEEK,” SEPTEMBER 30 THROUGH OCTOBER 6

This Year’s Theme: “Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Freedom to Read”

SAN DIEGO – To help raise awareness regarding the censorship of books, the San Diego Public Library will host an *All-Day Read-Aloud Reading Marathon* on Thursday, October 4, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. featuring librarian readers and special guests, poet and Broadway lyricist Reg E. Gaines and poet, blogger and San Diego State University lecture Delores Fisher, at the Central Library located at 820 E Street in downtown San Diego. This year’s Banned Books Week program is presented in conjunction with the months long SDPL library project, *Searching for Democracy: A Public Conversation about the Constitution* sponsored by Cal Humanities.

“It’s important to realize that not every book will be right for every reader,” says San Diego Public Library Director Deborah Barrow. “However, the freedom to choose for ourselves is a hard-won right that we must not take for granted. Reading, speaking, thinking and expressing ourselves freely are core American values.”

Observed since 1982, the Banned Books Week campaign is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, American Library Association, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Association of American Publishers and National Association of College Stores. The campaign is endorsed by the Center for the Book of the Library of Congress.

Searching for Democracy brings together people from diverse backgrounds to attend and discuss the Constitution at programs including lectures, book discussions, films, digital stories, and performance. Young and old, rich and poor, new citizens and long-term residents are provided the opportunity to openly explore the understanding of our American heritage and citizenry. The endeavor will also afford individual library patrons a greater understanding of the Library’s vast collection of Constitution related titles and digital resources.

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Between 400 and 500 book challenges are recorded each year by the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. However, it is estimated that less than one-quarter of all challenges are reported and recorded by public and school libraries. A "challenge" is defined as a formal, written complaint filed with a library or school about a book's content or appropriateness. The majority of challenges (roughly 60 percent) are brought by parents, followed by library patrons and administrators. Each challenge represents an effort to remove books from school curricula or library shelves.

The American Library Association along with its fellow co-sponsors of Banned Books Week host an annual Virtual Read-Out where readers from around the world are able to participate. For more information on Banned Books Week, please visit the American Library Association at <http://www.ala.org>.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library's Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library's catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

The City of San Diego Public Library – Your Link to the Past and Gateway to the Future

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